

# The Hawaiian Star,

DAILY AND SEMI-WEEKLY.

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Frank L. Hoogs, Editor

THURSDAY, JULY 30, 1903.

## FLOODS AND CLOUDBURSTS.

The enormous destruction of life and property caused recently by floods and cloudbursts on the mainland, and the fatalities caused by the electric storms—six people were killed by lightning at Alpena, Michigan, yesterday—has of necessity, called the attention of scientists to the matter and led them to seek for causes. Among those who have given forth opinions upon the subject is John P. Brown, Secretary of the International Society of Arboriculture. Mr. Brown has devoted forty years of study to the subject, and his views should therefore merit consideration.

Cloudbursts, or excessive rain storms, floods, and violent electrical storms, Secretary Brown puts to the same cause, the destruction of our forests. The decline in the productiveness of China he ascribes to the forest denudation, yet, he points out that America in sixty years has destroyed more timber than China has done in 3000 years. Predicting however is not a safe proposition, but the argument against denudation is cogent.

In the early part of last century the forests skirted the banks and shaded the headwaters of rivers like the Ohio and the Mississippi. The porous soil was held in place. The rainfall and the melting snow sank into the ground and furnished a regular supply of streams and springs. The forests have been cut, the porous soil has been washed away, the snow unprotected by trees melts quickly, the absence of trees has also disturbed the electric currents, cloudbursts become more frequent in the treeless districts, and the whole result is increased flood water in every water course, feeding the great rivers, which now roll an ever increasing volume of water downwards, that overflows the banks and carries death and destruction in every direction.

The amount of forest destruction annually is most appalling. The forestry bureau is at work reforesting, and it plants every year 5,000,000 trees which is a creditable piece of work. But on the other hand our industries and exports call for the cutting down of 9,000,000 acres of forest annually. Five million trees do not go very far towards replacing nine millions of acres of trees.

We suffer from similar conditions here. Forest destruction has denuded the Waianae mountains and has sensibly affected the water supply of that region, and the same tale comes from the other islands. We are going to have an expert forester come out and make an effort to improve our conditions, but if we can make no more headway than is made upon the mainland, our progress will be slow. Allowing Nuuanu valley to fall into its primitive condition, and taking away the cattle, has already shown us the advantage of reforestation. The Nuuanu stream is now seldom, if ever dry, but runs as a purring brook at all seasons. A few years ago it was as dry as Sahara, the major part of the year, and during a few hours was a roaring torrent. The theories of the Secretary of the International Society of Arboriculture are based on solid facts, and may be accepted as true.

## OPTIMISTIC HUMANITY.

Man is by nature an optimistic animal with regard to his tenure of life, especially in his early manhood. But even in age he cannot realize that death is going to take him. It may that decrepit old Smith next door who is ninety-three if he is an hour, but it is not going to take him, Jones, who though he is ninety-five, feels himself thoroughly hale and hearty. And were it not for this optimism many things which are accomplished in this world would never be accomplished, and much of our progress would be signally retarded.

It is the optimism which enables men to charge a battery which is playing upon the advancing lines. Each individual man thinks that the man next to him will fall, but he feels very certain that he will escape safely out of the storm of leaden hail. "I bear a charmed life," cried Sergeant Fish at the battle of Santiago, "nothing will hurt me," and as he said the words a Spanish rifleman sent a bullet through his heart, and he fell for his country. But the spirit which inspired him, inspired also every man, or nearly every man in the regiment of the Rough Riders. This is only one recent instance, but it is the pivot point upon which all great charges are hung.

Of course there are cases where men devote themselves to certain death, as say in the attempt, to blow up the Cashmere Gate at Delhi, but even then the spirit of optimism has an unconscious, though a far lesser place. In the case of Arnold Winkelreid at Moxgarten, however, there was no optimism, it was pure self-devotion, but such cases are rare. The case of Quintus Curtius, mythical as it was, was a case of self-devotion, so was that of the elder Decius Mus, and there are numberless cases of self-devotion during our Indian and border wars by heroes whose deeds are unchronicled and unsung.

But take it by and large, and the cases of self-devotion, numerous as they must be are an almost infinitesimal percentage of the whole, and the true cause of nerve of man is his optimism, his feeling that though others may be hurt, he will not be, or that in the words of Sergeant Fish we each and all consider that we bear a "charmed life." It is hard for any one to realize that he is going to die. A man knows by reason that he must die but death always looks as if it were a long way off.

These thoughts suggest themselves when reading the telegram stating that a shocking disaster occurred at the United States cartridge factory, at Lowell, Massachusetts, yesterday. Working in cartridge factories or working in powder magazines is a most dangerous employment. Sooner or later, through some cause or another, these institutions blow up, killing a number of employees, wounding many more, and of course furnishing a quota of hair-breadth escapes. There is never any lack, however, of people who will seek employment in such places, and undoubtedly it is human optimism which urges those who seek. Employees are killed, employees are wounded, but there is a quota which escapes, and each individual feels certain that he will be the one to escape. The man working at his side stands an excellent chance of being killed, but he feels sure he will escape.

This is a curious phenomenon in human life, but that it exists is clearly demonstrable. Without this attribute man would never have advanced beyond the condition of the savage. Horace says that the man who first essayed the watery main in his dug out, had a heart of oak, bound with triple bands of brass on steel. He had nothing of the kind, he had human optimism and felt certain he was not going to get drowned, the other fellow would get drowned, not he. One can presume that the man who ate the first oyster was of a similar turn of mind. It is certain that the experimenter upon plague germs, who died the other day in Germany, as other experimenters had died before him was animated by this optimism. Other experimenters had died, he was certain he would not die, so he went gaily to work, took plague and died. Clearly the optimism which makes each man think that he bears a charmed life, is one of the most valuable assets possessed by humanity.

The Supreme Court was filled yesterday afternoon to hear Davis on the witness stand. A circus was not in it beside the district judge. He not only answered questions but he kept up a fire of running comment with an occasional outburst which brought smiles to the lips of the spectators. An enterprising theatrical man should get up a little piece as a curtain raiser with Davis



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as the chief comic character. The stenographic notes would furnish material for the funny dialogue.

Poor Sumner, he is very nearly squeezed dry. As soon as his last dollar has been taken from him, the Sumner case will cease to be of public interest. No lawyer will want to take up a case for nothing, and no relation will want to have anything to do with an impecunious uncle. The end of the Sumner case is in sight, there is only twenty thousand dollars or so to assimilate now.

Does it ever occur to Colonel Hauke that he is a perfect God-send to the papers during the dull season. He is far more interesting, locally, than a big papaya, or a double yolked egg, or the sea serpent. The Colonel always takes himself so seriously that he is most inexpressibly funny—and then when he takes to fitting on other people's clothes he becomes the howling joke of the season. A clown in his little brother's hat and jacket is not in it beside him.

The appointment of T. F. Lansing to the position of Commissioner of Immigration is eminently satisfactory. The Star has advocated Mr. Lansing's claims to office before. His work is always satisfactory and able, and in his new position he will prove a valuable official.

Four hundred thousand dollars is a high figure to pay for funeral ceremonies, especially in a country like Italy where most things are very cheap. But medieval pageants in modern days are costly. Vast crowds from all parts of Europe viewed the unique ceremony of a papal funeral, and the city of Rome must have reaped a rich harvest, commercially.

When labor unions take to blowing up valuable property they get themselves on the wrong side of the law. The legal aspect of labor questions is thoroughly understood and appreciated in New Zealand and probably no where else. The consequence is that in New Zealand there are no labor outrages.

There is a regular mania for treasure hunting. Even millionaires are bitten with the fever. Arbutle of coffee and sugar fame is chasing the elusive pirate gold and gems in South America. If he wants any more excitement old Captain Brown or Captain Walker will supply him with information on the strict Q. T. for a consideration.

The Folsom convicts still keep to

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Ads under "Situations Wanted," inserted free until further notice.

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For sale cheap, two fine lots in Kaimuki Charles L. Rhodes, Star Office.

A fine desk, made of native woods. Price \$250.00. Apply to P. O. Box 543.

A magnificent building site on the Punchbowl slope near Thurston avenue. Particulars at Star office.

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Desirable unfurnished rooms for rent, reasonable, en suite or single. Best location in town. 1189 Alakea, corner of Beretania.

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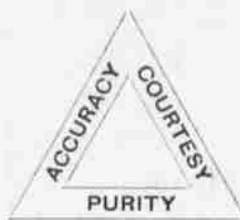
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gether and have exchanged shots with their pursuers, no damage having been done on either side. The danger lies more in outrages which may be committed upon outlying farms than in any fight the convicts may put up. As a rule men of this type have very little stomach for fair fighting even though a noose may be round their necks.

It is some what of a comment upon the lurid tales about the Leper Settlement, which were told in the legislature, than one of the inmates, who has been a chronic klecker, and no doubt supplied some of the lurid details, now refuses to go. He is merely a suspect, and no disease has developed in ten years. Superintendent McVeigh considers the man should be set free. But, oh, dear no, the man knows when he is well off, and much prefers to draw his rations, live rent free and do no work, rather than get into the cold and pitiless world and hustle for a living. What a lot of balderdash was talked in the legislature upon the subject.

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